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1918
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THE
AVENUE OF THE ALLIES
AND
VICTORY

BY ALFRED NOYES
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS
BY GUILDBRIDGE





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PRESENTED BY 1912

THE AVENUE OF THE ALLIES



VICTORY

“The kinship of ideals and purposes between nations
constitutes a permanent bond of union.”

JOHN LEWIS GRIFFITHS



© John Lane Company, from "Defenders of Democracy"

ALLIES' DAY

From the Original Painting

By Childe Hassam

"I want the picture dedicated to the British and French nations commemorating the coming together of the three peoples in the Fight for Democracy."

Childe Hassam

Altman Prize, National Academy, 1918

THE
AVENUE OF THE ALLIES
AND
VICTORY

BY ALFRED NOYES

WITH FRONTISPIECE

BY CHILDE HASSAM

FROM THE ORIGINAL PAINTING

FOREWORD BY WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

THE BOOK COMMITTEE OF THE
ART WAR RELIEF
599 FIFTH AVENUE · NEW YORK CITY

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BY ALFRED NOYES

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Blisner

SEP 5 1918



AUG 20 1919

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THE Committee is grateful for the privilege of assembling the contents of this book, to which one can return and renew the "fineness and glow" of certain epoch making days, of the last few years.

When Mr. Alfred Noyes published his *Nocturne*, "The Avenue of the Allies," it thrilled America, as it always will do, with its beauty, majesty and truth. It became linked in the thought of many with Mr. Childe Hassam's painting of another historic scene, the year before, when the flags of Great Britain and of France were first hung with the Stars and Stripes and the streets were thronged to greet General Joffre and Mr. Balfour, emissaries of the new comradeship between nations.

Mr. Hassam gave his fine picture and Mr. Paul Manship his medallion of Victory to be reproduced in aid of war relief. It is typical of Mr. Alfred Noyes's generous spirit toward America and his desire for international fellowship that, on the eve of his departure for Europe, he has given the two poems printed here for the same purpose.

Mr. Noyes has entered into the lives as well as the life of America. In returning to England he is not only going home but leaving home. Whatever honours await him in the future in England, he will be thought of throughout the world as Poet Laureate of the Allies.

Mr. Taft has honoured us by writing the Foreword. No one could do it more appropriately than he. One remembers that in 1911, when Mr. Taft was President of the United States, he advocated the submission to arbitration of all international disputes, even those involving questions of honour and territory. Thus he became the forerunner of the movement for a union of nations to secure world peace.

The entire profits from the sale of this book will be given to war relief. Mr. Noyes has been asked to name an organization in England to dispense one-half the proceeds and he has designated the Royal Literary Fund. This is in harmony with the desires of the Art War Relief, for the family tie of literature between England and America has never been broken.

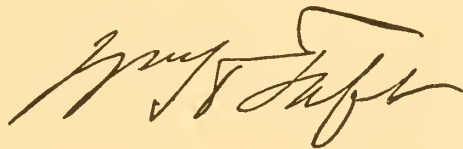
All lovers of the arts who purchase this book may rejoice that they are aiding men and women who can do much to replace in the world, the beauty which war has so ruthlessly destroyed.

CAROLINE HENDERSON GRIFFITHS
Chairman Book Committee

HELEN SARGENT HITCHCOCK
Chairman Art War Relief

FOREWORD

MR. ALFRED NOYES has given his beautiful poem "The Avenue of the Allies" for war relief work. One-half of the proceeds from the sale of this little volume will be given to the Royal Literary Fund, and the other half for the relief of artists and their families who have suffered privations due to the war. Mr. Noyes has also allowed the compilers of this volume to include his poem "Victory." Mr. Noyes is one of the great poets of this generation. He has in times past sung much for peace; but when the German monster of militarism showed his grisly head, he was changed, as many others were, into a trumpeter of the war to the uttermost. And now Mr. Noyes is anxious with the rest of us over the outcome of the congress at Paris. Should it be what we all hope it will be, no pæan of joy will be more vibrant and beautiful than that uttered by Mr. Noyes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, likely reading "Alfred Noyes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the page.

THE AVENUE OF THE ALLIES

THE AVENUE OF THE ALLIES

∴

THIS is the song of the wind as it came
Tossing the flags of the nations to flame:
*I am the breath of God. I am His laughter.
I am His Liberty. That is my name.*

So it descended, at night, on the city.
So it went lavishing beauty and pity,
Lighting the lordliest street of the world
With half of the banners that earth has unfurled;
Over the lamps that are brighter than stars,
Laughing aloud on its way to the wars,
Proud as America, sweeping along
Death and destruction like notes in a song,
Leaping to battle as man to his mate,
Joyous as God when He moved to create, —
Never was voice of a nation so glorious,
Glad of its cause and afire with its fate!
Never did eagle on mightier pinion
Tower to the height of a brighter dominion,
Kindling the hope of the prophets to flame,
Calling aloud on the deep as it came,
*Cleave me a way for an army with banners.
I am His Liberty. That is my name.*

Know you the meaning of all they are doing?
 Know you the light that their soul is pursuing?
 Know you the might of the world they are making,
 This nation of nations whose heart is awaking?
 What is this mingling of peoples and races?
 Look at the wonder and joy in their faces!
 Look how the folds of the union are spreading!
 Look, for the nations are come to their wedding.
 How shall the folk of our tongue be afraid of it?
 England was born of it. England was made of it,
 Made of this welding of tribes into one,
 This marriage of pilgrims that followed the sun!
 Briton and Roman and Saxon were drawn
 By winds of this Pentecost, out of the dawn,
 Westward, to make her one people of many;
 But here is a union more mighty than any.
 Know you the soul of this deep exultation?
 Know you the word that goes forth to this nation?

*I am the breath of God. I am His Liberty.
 Let there be light over all His creation.*

Over this Continent, wholly united,
 They that were foemen in Europe are plighted.
 Here in a league that our blindness and pride
 Doubted and flouted and mocked and denied,
 Dawns the Republic, the laughing, gigantic
 Europe, united, beyond the Atlantic.
 That is America, speaking one tongue,
 Acting her epics before they are sung,
 Driving her rails from the palms to the snow,

Through States that are greater than Emperors know,
 Forty-eight States that are empires in might,
 But ruled by the will of one people tonight,
 Nerved as one body, with net-works of steel,
 Merging their strength in the one Commonweal,
 Brooking no poverty, mocking at Mars,
 Building their cities to talk with the stars,
 Thriving, increasing by myriads again
 Till even in numbers old Europe may wane.
 How shall a son of the England they fought
 Fail to declare the full pride of his thought,
 Stand with the scoffers who, year after year,
 Bring the Republic their half-hidden sneer?
 Now, as in beauty she stands at our side,
 Who shall withhold the full gift of his pride?
 Not the great England who knows that her son,
 Washington, fought her, and Liberty won.
 England, whose names like the stars in their station,
 Stand at the foot of that world's Declaration, —
 Washington, Livingston, Langdon, she claims them.
 It is her right to be proud when she names them,
 Proud of that voice in the night as it came,
 Tossing the flags of the nations to flame:

*I am the breath of God. I am His laughter.
 I am His Liberty. That is my name.*

Flags, in themselves are but rags that are dyed.
 Flags, in that wind, are a nation enskied.
 See, how they grapple the night as it rolls
 And trample it under like triumphing souls.

Over the city that never knew sleep,
 Look at the riotous folds as they leap.
 Thousands of tri-colors laughing for France,
 Ripple and whisper and thunder and dance;
 Thousands of flags for Great Britain aflame
 Answer their sisters in Liberty's name.
 Belgium is burning in pride overhead.
 Nippon is near, and her sun-rise is red.
 Under and over and fluttering between
 Italy burgeons in red, white, and green.
 See, how they climb like adventurous flowers,
 Over the tops of the terrible towers. . . .

There, in the darkness, the glories are mated.

There, in the darkness, a world is created.

There, in this Pentecost, streaming on high.

There, with a glory of stars in the sky.

*There the broad flag of our union and liberty
 Rides the proud night-wind and tyrannies die.*

VICTORY

VICTORY

*WRITTEN AFTER THE BRITISH SERVICE AT TRINITY
CHURCH, NEW YORK*

I

BEFORE those golden altar-lights we stood,
Each one of us remembering his own dead.
A more than earthly beauty seemed to brood
On that hushed throng, and bless each bending head.

Beautiful on that gold, the deep-sea blue
Of those young seamen, ranked on either side,
Blent with the khaki, while the silence grew
Deep, as for wings — O, deep as England's pride.

Beautiful on that gold, two banners rose —
Two flags that told how Freedom's realm was made,
One fair with stars of hope, and one that shows
The glorious cross of England's long crusade;

Two flags, now joined, till that high will be done
Which sent them forth to make the whole world one.

II

There were no signs of joy that eyes could see.
Our hearts were all three thousand miles away.
There were no trumpets blown for victory.
A million dead were calling us that day.

And eyes grew blind, at times; but grief was deep,
Deeper than any foes or friends have known;
For O, my country's lips are locked to keep
Her bitterest loss her own, and all her own.

Only the music told what else was dumb,
The funeral march to which our pulses beat;
For all our dead went by, to a muffled drum.
We heard the tread of all those phantom feet.

Yes. There was victory! Deep in every soul,
We heard them, marching to their unseen goal.

III

There, once again, we saw the Cross go by,
The Cross that fell with all those glorious towers,
Burnt black at Rheims and mocked on Calvary,
Till — in one night — the crosses rose like flowers,

Legions of small white crosses, mile on mile,
Pencilled with names that had outfought all pain,
Where every shell-torn acre seems to smile —
Who shall destroy the cross that rose again?

Out of the world's Walpurgis, where hope perished,
Where all the forms of faith in ruin fell,
Where every sign of heaven that earth had cherished
Shrivelled among the lava-floods of hell,

The eternal Cross that conquers might with right
Rose like a star to lead us through the night.

IV

How shall the world remember? Men forget.

Our dead are all too many even for Fame;
Man's justice kneels to kings, and pays no debt
To those who never courted her acclaim.

Cheat not your heart with promises to pay
For gifts beyond all price so freely given.
Where is the heart so rich that it can say
To those who mourn, "I will restore your heaven?"

But these, with their own hands, laid up their treasure
Where never an emperor can break in and steal,
Treasure for those that loved them past all measure
In those high griefs that earth can never heal,

Proud griefs, that walk on earth, yet gaze above,
Knowing that sorrow is but remembered love.

V

Love that still holds us with immortal power,
Yet cannot lift us to His realms of light;
Love that still shows us heaven for one brief hour
Only to daunt the heart with that sheer height;

Love that is made of loveliness entire
In form and thought and act; and still must shame
us,
Because we ever acknowledge and aspire,
And yet let slip the shining hands that claim us;

O, if this Love might cloak with rags His glory;
 Laugh, eat and drink, and dwell with suffering men,
 Sit with us at our hearth, and hear our story,
 This world — we thought — might be transfigured
 then.

“But O,” Love answered with swift human tears,
 “*All these things have I done, these many years.*”

VI

“*This day,*” Love said, “*if ye will hear my voice;*
I mount and sing with birds in all your skies.
I am the soul that calls you to rejoice.
And every wayside flower is my disguise.”

“*Look closely. Are my wings too wide for pity?*
Look closely. Do these tender hues betray?
How often have I sought my Holy City?
How often have ye turned your hearts away?”

“*Is there not healing in the beauty I bring you?*
Am I not whispering in green leaves and rain?
Singing in all that woods and seas can sing you?
Look, once, on Love, and earth is heaven again.”

“*O, did your Spring but once a century waken,*
The heaven of heavens for this would be forsaken.”

VII

There's but one gift that all our dead desire,
One gift that men can give, and that's a dream,
Unless we, too, can burn with that same fire
Of sacrifice; die to the things that seem;

Die to the little hatreds; die to greed;
Die to the old ignoble selves we knew;
Die to the base contempts of sect and creed,
And rise again, like these, with souls as true.

Nay (since these died before their task was finished)
Attempt new heights, bring even their dreams to
birth;
Build us that better world, O, not diminished
By one true splendor that they planned on earth.

And that's not done by sword, or tongue, or pen.
There's but one way. God make us better men.

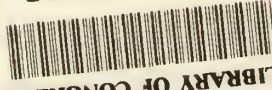
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